

EVIDENCES FOR JESUS STUDY

1. Matthew 16:13

- a. Who do you say Jesus is?
- b. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God (**John 5:24, 6:35, 8:23-24, 10:30, 14:6-7**).
- c. What are the possibilities? Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Was that claim true or false?
 - i. If false, then Jesus either
 1. Was a mythical character that didn't exist: **Legend**.
 2. Knew that his claims were false: **Liar**
 3. He didn't know his claims were false: **Lunatic**
 - i. If true, then Jesus is **Lord**.
 - ii. Comments
 - A. Extra-biblical manuscripts prove Jesus to be a historical figure.
 - B. Jesus' teachings and the impact of his life make it impossible to entertain the possibility that Jesus was either a liar or a lunatic.
 - C. We must not conclude that Jesus was simply a good moral. That option is not open to us, because it would mean Jesus lied when he claimed to be the Son of God.
 - D. Jesus is clearly Lord, the Son of God as he claimed.

2. Evidences

- a. Miracles: attested to by numerous eyewitnesses (**John 20:30-31**)
- b. Prophecies fulfilled:
 - i. Born of a virgin—**Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18, 24-25**
 - ii. House of David—**Jeremiah 23:5, Luke 3:23, 31**
 - iii. Born in Bethlehem—**Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1**
 - iv. Ministry to begin in Galilee—**Isaiah 9:1, Matthew 4:12-13, 17**
 - v. Betrayed by a friend—**Psalms 41:9, Matthew 10:4, Matthew 26: 49-50**
 - vi. Sold for 30 pieces of silver—**Zechariah 11:12, Matthew 26:15**
 - vii. Wounded and bruised—**Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 27:26**
 - viii. Bones not broken—**Psalms 34:20, John 19:32-33**
 - ix. Crucified with thieves—**Isaiah 53:12, Matthew 27:38**
 - x. Resurrection—**Psalms 16:10, Acts 2 :31**
 - xi. There are more than 400 Messianic prophecies. The probability that any man might have lived and fulfilled just 8 prophecies is one in 10 to the 17th power or 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000
- c. Jesus' life and teaching—his teaching surpass human wisdom while his life exemplifies them perfectly
- d. The resurrection – perhaps the most convincing of all evidences
 - i. **The Prediction (Matthew 27:62-66)**. Jesus' predictions about his own resurrection were so well known that guards were posted at the tomb. The first question: Did he really die? Perhaps he passed out on the cross and was later revived...
 - ii. **The Death (John 19:31-34)**. Professional executioners would not make such a basic error as to think a live person was dead. Medical experts indicate that the water that

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flowed from Jesus' pierced side would be the pericardium, a sac around the heart that fills with water when the heart ruptures. Jesus was clearly dead. But perhaps they visited the wrong tomb and mistakenly thought he was raised...

iii. The Wrong Tomb

A. **John 19:38-42**—The tomb was near the cross.

B. **Matthew 27:61-66**—Mary saw where he was buried. Pilate knew where to send the guards. They didn't visit the wrong tomb. So let's visit the tomb.

iv. **The Empty Tomb (Matthew 28:11-15)**. Was the tomb empty? If not, the Jews would have produced the body. The fact that they tried to explain away the empty tomb shows in fact it was empty. So, was the body stolen as they claimed?

v. **The Stolen Body**. It would have been incredibly difficult for anyone to steal the body considering the huge stone and the Roman guards in front of the tomb. In any case there are two possibilities: Someone other than the disciples stole the body. The disciples were deceived and wishfully hallucinated the risen Christ. OR the disciples stole the body and hoaxed the resurrection. Let's consider the first possibility:

A. Someone other than the disciples stole the body.

John 20:19-29 – Disciples are scared and hiding, having earlier fled at Jesus' arrest. Was this a mass hallucination? Thomas, the skeptic, touched Jesus. This was no hallucination to Thomas. But perhaps it was all a hoax, the second possibility...

B. The Disciples stole the body.

Acts 4:12-13 – Remember the cowardly disciples (**Matthew 26:56**)? Peter who denied Jesus? They are now men of remarkable courage. Something had happened. In fact, according to early church history all the disciples but John died martyrs' deaths:

Peter—crucified head downwards

James—beheaded by Herod (Acts 1:1-2)

Andrew—crucified

Philip—martyred

Bartholomew—flogged to death

Thomas—speared to death

Matthew—martyred

James—crucified

Jude—shot with arrows

Simon the Zealot—crucified

Matthias—axed to death

Why did these men endure such atrocities? Who would suffer and die for a lie that gains them nothing? When men are all alone and under pressure, they crack. These men did not. Why not?

vi. **1 Corinthians 15:1-6**. These men had seen Jesus raised from the dead. In fact, over 500 people at once saw the resurrected Jesus.

Indeed Jesus has been raised. The proof is logical and overwhelming.

3. **Conclusion: Acts 26:24-29**. Christianity is true and reasonable. Jesus is the Son of God! We must now make the decision to follow him.